

1570  
AN EPISTLE

OF THE MOSTE

myghty & redoubted Prince  
Henry the. viii. by the grace  
of God kyng of England  
and of Fraunce, lord of  
Irelande, defender of the  
Faith, and supreme heed  
of the church of England,  
nexte vnder Christe, Writ-  
ten to the Emperours  
maiestie, to all Chris-  
ten Princes, and  
to all those that  
truly and  
sincerely professe Chris-  
tes religion.

8. April. 1570.

1538  
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IN THIS EPISTLE BOTHE  
causes are playnely declared, why the kyn-  
ges hyghenes ought neyther to sende nor go to  
counceill indicted at Vincence, and also how  
perylouse a thinge it is for all suche as  
professe the trewe doctrine  
of Christ, to come  
thether.

REVNTO ALSO IS AN-  
d the Protestation made the last yere by the  
ges hyghenes, his holle Counsaile and clers  
gye, as touchinge the Counceille indis-  
cted at Mantua &c.

Wede bothe o Christen Reader, truthe is co-  
myng home, longe afore beyng in captiuyte,  
stepp forth and meete her by the waye: yf thou  
see her presente, embrace hir, and shewe thy selfe  
gladde of her retourne.



X Fc 4

HENRY THE, VIII, BY THE  
grace of God kynge of Englande and of  
Fraunce &c. saluteth the Emperour, Chri-  
sten princes, and all true Christen men,  
desyryng peace and Concorde  
amonges them.



HERE as not long  
sithens a boke came  
forth in oure and all  
oure counsailes na-  
mes, whyche bothe  
cōteyned many cau-

les, why we refused the Councylle,  
than by the Bysshoppe of Romes  
blurped power fyrste indycted atte  
Mantua, to be kepte the. xxiii. daye  
of May, after prozoged to Nouem-  
bre, noo place appoynted where it  
shulde be kepte. And where as the  
same boke doth sufficiently proue,  
that oure cause coulde take no hurt,

A ii

ney-

Uol.

## A N E P I S T L E.

neyther with any thynge doone oꝝ  
 decreed in suche a companye of ad-  
 dicte men to one secte, noꝝ in any o-  
 ther Councille called by his vsur-  
 ped power, we thynke it nothyng  
 necessarie, so ofte to make new pro-  
 testations, as the bysshop of Rome  
 and his courtes, by subtyltye and  
 crafte, doo inuente wayes to mocke  
 the worlde by newe pretended gene-  
 rall Councilles. Yet not withstan-  
 dyng bycause that some thynges  
 haue nowe occurred, eyther vppon  
 occasion gyuen vs, by chaunge of  
 the place, oꝝ els throughe other con-  
 syderations, whyche nowe beyng  
 knowen to the worlde, maye do mo-  
 che good, we thought we shulde do,  
 but euen as that loue enforceth vs,  
 whiche we owe vnto Chzistis fayth  
 and relygion, to adde this Epistell:  
 And yet we proteste, that we neyther  
 put



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put forth that booke, neyther yet we wolde this Epistle to be set afoze it, that thereby we shulde seme lesse to desyre a generall Counccille, than any other prynce oz potentate, but rather more desyrous of it, so it were free for all partes, and vniuersall.

And further we desyre al good princes, potentates, & people, to esteeme and thynke that noo prynce wolde more wyllingly be pzeent at suche a Counccille than we, suche a one, we meane, as we speake of in our Protestatyon, made concernynge the Counccille of Mantua. Trewely as our forefathers inuented nothynge more holper than general Councils, vsed as they ought to be, so there is almost nothinge, that may do more hurt to the Christian comon welth, to the faith, to our religion, than generall councils, if they be abused to

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luker, to gaynes, to the establishe-  
ment of errours. They be called ge-  
nerall, and euen by their name doo  
admonyshe vs, that all Chrysten  
men, which do discent in any opini-  
on, inaye in them openly, frankely,  
and without feare of punysshement  
or displeasure, say theyr mynde. For  
seyng suche thinges as are decreed  
in generall Councils, touche egally  
all men that gyue assent therunto, it  
is mete that euery man inaye bolde-  
ly saye there, that he thinketh. And  
verely we suppose, that it ought not  
to be called a generall Councylle,  
where alonlye those men are harde,  
which are determined for euer, in all  
poyntes, to defend the popyshe part,  
and to arme theym selfe to fyght in  
the Bysshoppe of Romes quarelle,  
though it were against god and his  
scriptures. It is no generall Coun-  
cill,

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cill, neyther it ought to be called generall, where the same men be onely aduocates and aduersaries, the same accused and iuges. No it is agaynste the lawe of nature, eyther that we shuld condescende to so vnreasonable a lawe against our selves, either that we shuld suffre our selves to be leste withoute all defence, and beyng oppressed with greatest injuries, to haue no refuge to succour our selues at. The byshop of Rome and his, be our great ennemyes, as we and all the worlde may well perceue by his doynges. He despyeth nothinge more than our hurte, and the destruction of oure Realme: do not we than violate the iudgement of nature, yf we gyue hym power and auctozitie to be our iudge: His pretended honour fyrste gotten by superstition, after encreased by violence,

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# A N E P I S T L E .

olence, and other wayes, as euylle  
as that : his power sette vppe by  
pretense of religion, in dede, both a-  
gaynste relyggyon, and also contra-  
ry to the worde of god : his prima-  
cy, bozne by the ignozancye of the  
worlde, nourysched by the ambition  
of Bysshops of Rome, defended by  
places of Scripture, faislly vnder-  
stande. These. iiii. thynges we saye,  
whiche are fallen with vs, and are  
lyke to fall in other realmes shortly,  
shall they not be establyshed again,  
yf he maye decyde our cause as hym  
lysteth? If he maye at his pleasure  
opprelle a cause moſte ryghtuouse,  
and ſet vp his, moſte againe truth?  
Certaynely he is verpe blynde, that  
ſeeth not, what ende we maye loke  
foz of our controuerſie, if ſuche our  
ennemye maye gyue the ſentence.  
We deſyre, yf it were in any wyſe  
poſſi-

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possible, a council, where some hope may be, that those thinges, shall be restored, whiche now beinge dep<sup>r</sup>uate, are lyke, if they be not amended, to be the vtter ruine of Chrysten religion. And as we do desyre suche a councyll, and thinke it mete, that all men in all their prayers, shoulde craue and desyre it of god: euen so we thinke it pertayneth vnto oure office, to prouyde bothe that these popyshe subtylties hurt none of our subiectes, and also to admonyshe other Chrysten princis, that the byshoppe of Rome maye not by their consent abuse the auctozitie of kyn<sup>g</sup>es, eyther to the extynguyshing of the true preaching of scripture (that now begynneth to spryng, to grow, and spred abroad) eyther to the troubling of princes liberties, to the dimynishynge of kyn<sup>g</sup>es auctozities,  
and

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and to the great blemyshe of theyr  
 princely maiestie. We dout nothing  
 but a reder not parciall, wyl soone  
 approue suche thynges, as we write  
 in the treatyse folowynge, not soo  
 moche for oure excuse, as that the  
 worlde maye perceyue both the son-  
 dyr deceytes, craftes, and subtilties  
 of the papistes, and also, how moch  
 we desyre, that controuersyes in re-  
 lygyon maye ones be taken awaye.  
 All that we sayde there of Mantua,  
 maye here well be spoken of Vin-  
 cence. They do almoste agree in all  
 poyntes. Neyther it is lyke, that  
 there wol be any more at this coun-  
 cille at Vincence, than were the last  
 yere atte Mantua. Trewelye he is  
 worthy to be deceyued, that beyng  
 twyse mocked, woll not beware the  
 thyrde tyme. If any this last yere  
 made forth towarde Mantua, and  
 beyng



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theynge halfe on their waye, thanne  
perceyued, that they hadde taken  
vppon them that tourney in bayne,  
we do not thynke them so foolyshe,  
that they wolle hereafter ryde farre  
oute of towne to be mocked. The  
tyme also, and the state of thynges  
is suche, that matters of Kelygyon  
maye rather now be broughte far-  
ther in trouble, as other thynges  
are, than be comodiously intre-  
ated of, and decyded. For where as in  
maner the hole worlde is after such  
sorte troubyd with warres, so in-  
combez with the great preparati-  
ons that the Turke maketh, canne  
there be any manne so agaynste the  
setlynge of Kelygyon, that he wolle  
thynke this tyme mete for a general  
Councill: vndoubtedlye it is mete  
that such controuerlies, as we haue  
with the Bysshoppe of Rome, be ta-  
ken

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ken as they are, that is moche greater, than that they maye eyther be discuffed in this soo troublesome a tyme, oꝛ elles be cominitted vnto pꝛocourers, without our greate iopardie, all be it the tyme were neuer so quiete. What other pꝛinces wyl do, we can not tell, but we wyl neyther leaue our realme at this tyme, neyther we wyl truste any pꝛocourer with oure cause, wherein the holle staye and welth of our realme standeth, but rather we wyl be atte the handlynge therof our selfe. Foꝛ excepte both an other iudge be agreed vppon foꝛ those matters, and also a place moꝛe commodiouse be pꝛouyded, foꝛ the debating of our causes, all be it al other thinges were as we wolde haue them, yet maye we lawfully refuse to come oꝛ sende any to his pꝛetended Councylle. We wolle  
in

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in noo case make hym our arbyter,  
whychē not many yeres paste, oure  
cause not harde, gaue sentence a-  
gaynste vs. We woll that suche do-  
ctrine, as we, folowynge the scrip-  
ture, do pzoferre, rytely to be exami-  
nyd, discussyd, and to be bzought to  
scripture, as to the onely touche  
stone of true lernynge. We will not  
suffre them to be abolyshed, ere euer  
they be discussyd, ne to be oppzessed,  
befoze they be knowen: moche lesse  
we wyll suffre theym to be troden  
downe beinge so clerely trewe. No,  
as there is no tote in scripture, but  
we wolle defende it, thoughē it were  
with ieoperdie of oure lyfe, and pe-  
ryll of this our Realme: so is there  
no thyngē, that doeth oppzesse this  
doctrine, oꝝ obscure it, but we woll  
be at continuall warre therewith. As  
we haue abzogated all olde popishe  
tra-

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traditions in this our realme, whiche eyther dyd helpe his tyranny, or increase his pryde: soo yf the grace of God forsake vs not, we wyll wel foresee, that no newe naughtye traditions be made with our consente, to bynde vs or our realme. If men wyll not be willyngely blynde, they shall easly see euen by a due and euident pꝛofe in reson, though grace dothe not yet by the worde of Christ enter into theym, howe small thauctoꝝptie of the Bysshop of Rome is, by the lawfull denyall of the Duke of Mantua for the place. For yf the Bysshoppe of Rome dydde earnestly intende to kepe a councyll at Mantua, and hath power by the lawe of God, to calle pꝛynces to what place hym lyketh: why hath he not also auctoꝝtie, to chose what place hym lysteth: The Bysshop chose Mantua,

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tua, the Duke kepte hym oute of it.  
 If Paule the Byschoppe of Romes  
 auctoritye be so great, as he p̄tendeth,  
 why coulde not he compel Federicus,  
 Duke of Mantua, that the  
 Councille myghte be kepte there?  
 The Duke wolde not suffre it. No,  
 he forbaddē hym his towne. Howe  
 chaunceth it, that here excommuni-  
 cacyons flye not abroode? Why  
 dothe he not punyshe this Duke?  
 Why is his power, that was wonte  
 to be moze than fulle, here emptye?  
 wonte to be moze than all, here no-  
 thyng? Dothe he not calle men in  
 bayne to a Councille, yf they that  
 comme at his callynge, be excluded  
 the place; to the whyche he callethe  
 theym? Maye not kynges iustelye  
 refuse to come at his call, whan the  
 Duke of Mantua maye denye hym  
 the place, that he chooseth? If other  
 p̄yn-

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pꝛynces order hym as the Duke of  
 Mantua hath doone, what place  
 shall be lefte hym, where he maye  
 kepe his generall Council: Again,  
 If pꝛynces haue gyuen hym this  
 auctoritie, to calle a Councille, is  
 hit not necessarye, that they gyue  
 hym allso, all those thinges, with-  
 oute the whyche he canne not exer-  
 cise that his power: Shall he call  
 men, and woll ye let hym fynde no  
 place to calle them vnto: Cruely he  
 is not wonte to appoynte one of his  
 owne Cyties, a place to keepe the  
 Council in. No, the good manne is  
 so faythefull and frendely towarde  
 other, that seldome he despyeth pꝛin-  
 ces to be his gestis. And admytte he  
 shulde calle vs to one of his cityes,  
 shulde we safely walke within the  
 walles of suche our enemyes to wne?  
 were it mete for vs there to dyscusse  
 contro-



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controuersies of Kelygon, or to  
 kepe vs out of our ennemys trap-  
 pes: meteto studie for the defence  
 of suche doctrine as we professe, or  
 rather howe we myghte in suche a  
 thronge of perylls be in sauegarde  
 of our lyfe: Well, in this one acte  
 the byshoppe of Rome hath declared,  
 that he hath none auctoritie  
 vpon places in other mennes do-  
 mynyons, and therefore yf he pro-  
 myse a Councille in anye of those,  
 he promyseth that that is in an o-  
 ther man to persoutne, and so may  
 he deceyue vs agayne. Nowe if he  
 calle vs to one of his owne townes,  
 we be afrayde to be at suche an ho-  
 stes table. We saye, better to ryse a  
 hungred; then to goo thense with  
 our bellies full. But they saye,  
 the place is sounde, we neede not  
 more feare whete the Councill shall

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be kepte. As who saythe, that, that  
 chaunced at Mantua, maye not al-  
 so chaunce at Vincence. And as  
 though it were very lyke, that the  
 Venecians, menne of suche wyse-  
 dome, shoulde not bothe forsee,  
 and feare also that, that the wyse  
 Duke of Mantua semed to feare.  
 Certes, whanne we thynke vppon  
 the state, that the Venecians be in  
 now, hit seemeth noo very lykely  
 thynge, that they woll eyther leaue  
 Vincence, they? Cytte, to so many  
 nations, without some greate gar-  
 rison of souldyers, or elles that they  
 beynge elles where, so sore charged  
 all redy, wyl nowe noryshe an ar-  
 mye there. And if they wolde, dothe  
 not Paulus hym selfe graunt, that  
 it shulde be an euill presydent, and  
 an euill example, to haue an ar-  
 med Councille? How so euer it shal  
 be, we

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be, we moſte hartely deſyre you, that  
ye woll vouchefeſafe , to rede thoſe  
thinges, that we wrote this laſt yere  
touchynge the Mantuan Coun-  
rille. For we nothyng doubte, but  
you, of youre equitye, wyl ſtande  
on our ſyde agaynſte theyr ſubtyl-  
tye and fraudes, and iudge (excepte  
we be deceyued) that we in this bu-  
ſyneſſe, neyther gaue ſoo moche to  
oure affectyons , neyther withoute  
greate and moſte iuſte cauſes, re-  
fused theyr Councylles, theyr Cen-  
ſures, and Decrees. Whither theſe  
our wytynges pleaſe all menne, or  
noo, we thynke, we ought not to  
paſſe moche. Noo, if that, that in-  
dyfferently is wytten of vs, maye  
pleaſe indyfferente reders, our de-  
ſyre is accompliſhed . The falſe  
and myſtakynge of thynges, by men  
parcyall, ſhall moue vs nothyng,  
ozelles,

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ozelles very lytell. If we haue sayd  
aughte agaynste the deceptes of the  
Bysshop of Rome, that maye seme  
spoken to Charpely, we praye you,  
impute it to the hatredde we bare  
vnto byces, and not to any euille  
wyll that we bare hym. Noo, that  
he, and all his, maye percepue, that  
we are rather at streyfe with his by-  
ces, than with hym, and his; our  
prayer is, bothe that it maye please  
god, at the laste to open theyr eyes,  
to make softe theyr harde hartes,  
and that they ones maye with vs  
(theyr owne gloze set aparte) study  
to set forth the euerlastynge glorie,  
of the euerlastynge God.

**T**hus myghtye Emperours  
fare ye mooste hartely well, and ye  
Christen Prynces, the pylors and  
staye of Christendome, fare ye har-  
tely well. Also all ye, what people se-  
uer

A N E P I S T L E.

euer ye are, whiche doo desyre, that  
the Gospel and glory of Christ maye  
flourishe, fare ye hartely well.

**C** Gyuen at London oute of oure  
Palace at westmynster, the eyghte  
of Apryll, the nyne and twen-  
tye yere of our  
reygne.

LONDINI IN AEDIBVS  
THOMAS BERTHE  
LETI REGII IM  
PRESS  
SORIS, EXCVS.

ANNO. M. D. XXXVIII.

CVM PRIVILEGIO.



